



H.R.1922 – JUPITER INLET LIGHTHOUSE OUTSTANDING NATURAL AREA ACT OF 2008

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 1922 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Tim Mahoney (D-FL) on April 18, 2007. The House Committee on Natural Resources voted to report the bill as amended by unanimous consent on February 13, 2008.

H.R. 1922 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on March 4, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R.1922 designates the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse as a federally protected Outstanding Natural Resource Area (Area) and as a unit of the National Landscape System. The bill designates the Area as such for the purposes of preserving, enhancing and protecting the Area for its natural, cultural, scientific, educational, scenic, and recreational values, as well as for its historical significance to the United States. The bill does not impede any of the activities or duties performed by the Coast Guard in the Area.

The legislation directs the Secretary of the Interior to consult with the Commandant of the Coast Guard to develop a long-term guidance plan for the maintenance of the public land in the Area. The Secretary is also authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with State, local, and county governments, as well as with private organizations to provide for the long-term management of the Area.

Additionally, the legislation authorizes the Secretary to acquire possession or interest in lands owned by private individuals or by any of the levels of State government that is adjacent to the Area. The bill stipulates that all additional adjacent lands must be acquired through donation, sale or exchange with willing parties.

BACKGROUND

The plans for the Jupiter Lighthouse (Lighthouse) were originally drawn by Lt. George Mead, prior to his becoming a hero of the Civil War at Gettysburg. The construction of the Lighthouse was impeded due to its limited access to the sea, and due to outbreaks of malaria and frequent attacks by Indians. The Lighthouse was isolated in its location in its early years, with the closest civilization of Titusville over 120 miles away. The Lighthouse location was previously the site of a crude stockade constructed by the Army, after the Army surrounded and deported over 500 Seminoles from Fort Jupiter after the Second Seminole Indian War.

With the expansion of American trade, more American ships were traveling along the Florida coast. The increased traffic, along with the dangerous reefs near the Jupiter Inlet, lead to many shipwrecks and created the need for a series of lighthouses along the Florida coast. The Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse was the first lighthouse to be built in this system, and was constructed and lit in 1860. During the Civil War, the Union army had the lighthouse keeper removed and temporarily disabled the Lighthouse. In 1973, the lighthouse was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Today, the Lighthouse is still functioning and stands at 105 feet tall, and is the oldest existing structure in Palm Beach County, Florida. The Lighthouse cost \$60,859.98 to build, which was twice the original budget. The Lighthouse is only one of thirteen functioning lighthouses to use a First Order Fresnel lens, and its light can be seen at a distance of eighteen miles, burning at one million candle watts. It is maintained by the Loxahatchee River Historical Society, and is funded by private donations. The lighthouse is maintained as an active maritime aid to navigation by the U.S. Coast Guard.



LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

HOUSE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE | CHAIRMAN ADAM PUTNAM

1420 LONGWORTH HOB, WASHINGTON, DC 20515

www.GOP.gov

PHONE 202.225.5107

FAX 202.226.0154

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has not scored this legislation.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information contact Justin Hanson at (202) 226-2302.